



THE AI RECKONING SERIES

Food for Thought: AI à la Carte

or the practical use of AI in the workplace

VICTOR DEL ROSAL ♦ 29 SEPTEMBER 2026 ♦ NATIONAL COLLEGE OF IRELAND



DECADES

*There are decades where nothing happens.
Then there are weeks where decades happen.*

Author unknown



AI LITERACY

The AI Badge



Your proof of AI fluency. Earned through real work, reviewed personally, and issued only when it meets the bar.





"All the News That's
Fit to Print"

The New York Times.

THE WEATHER.
Rain to-day; fair to-morrow.

VOL. LIII...NO. 16,774.

NEW YORK, FRIDAY, OCTOBER 9, 1903.—FOURTEEN PAGES.

ONE CENT

In Greater New York, Jersey City and Newark, TWO CENTS.

In 1903, the New York Times
predicted flying machines would be
built in one to ten *million* years.



The Wright brothers achieved the first powered flight **69** days later



AI on the *radar*



2015 *Disruption*

Change is exponential. We underestimate the knee of the curve .



2024 *Humanlike*

The boundary between human and machine capability is eroding.



2026 *The AI Reckoning*

The question is no longer whether AI can imitate us. It is what happens when intelligence itself becomes commoditised.



How capable is AI getting?

Not a feeling. A measurement.



SIX MEASUREMENTS · ONE DIRECTION

How capable is AI getting? *Measured.*

MEASURED

WHAT IT CAN DO

REASONING · ARC-AGI-2 ?

Puzzles it has *never* seen

95%

from 6.5%,
in 17 months



KNOWLEDGE · HUMANITY'S LAST EXAM ?

The *hardest* exam we wrote

52.7%

from 3.1%,
in 19 months



BENCHMARK SATURATION

Harder tests *fall* faster

11 mo

for ARC-AGI-2.
The first took 6 years.



WHY IT KEEPS RISING · THREE ENGINES

01 · PRE-TRAINING ? SCALE

Training *compute*

4–5×

more every year,
Epoch AI



02 · TEST-TIME REASONING ?

Same model, *more thinking*

95%

from 60%,
no retraining



03 · AGENTIC TOOL USE ?

How long it works *alone*

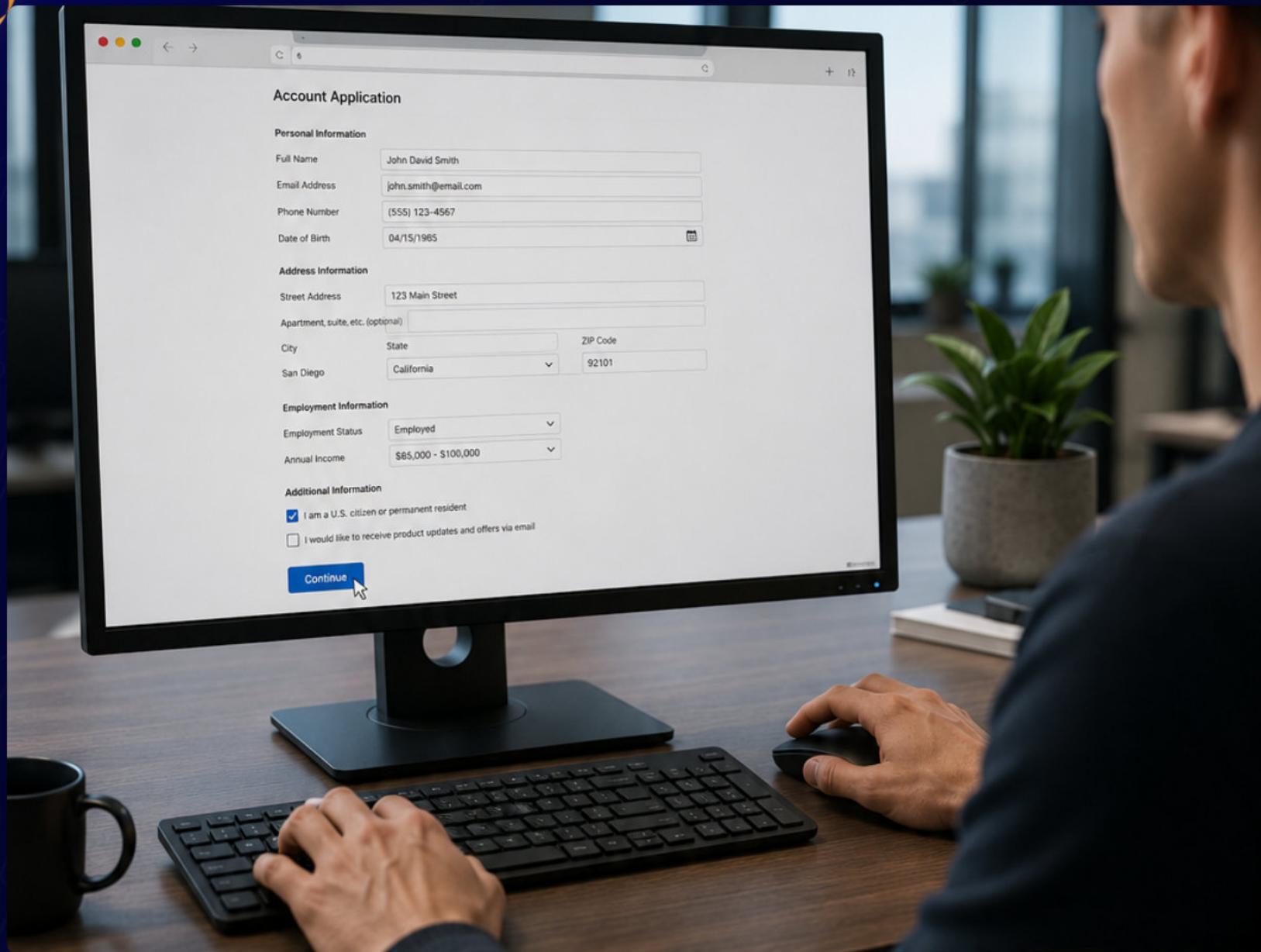
12 hrs

from 3 seconds
(GPT-2, 2019)



IT ALSO DISCOVERS a faster way to multiply matrices (AlphaEvolve ?, 2025) · sorting code now in a standard library (AlphaDev, 2023) · a 1946 maths conjecture, overturned (2026)

SOURCE ARC Prize; Center for AI Safety (HLE); Rein et al. 2023 (GPQA) with Epoch AI; Epoch AI, Notable AI Models; METR Time Horizon 1.1. Accessed 23 September 2026.



Systems were
built for
human
hands.



It turns out AI
can use them
too, **in the same
way we do.**





Where does it *stop*? Not at *human level*.

NARROW TOOLS

HUMAN LEVEL

FOUR REASONS IT KEEPS GOING

COPY

One trained AI becomes *a million* overnight.

SPEED

It thinks *faster* than any of us can.

SHARE

What one copy learns, *every copy* knows.

BUILD

It is starting to help build *the next one*.

06:12



Leo

AI assistant · online



A possible day in 2027 · scenario

While you slept I read two hundred and fourteen emails. Nine of them need you. They are at the top, in the order I would answer them.

06:12

Message



09:03



Leo

AI assistant · online



A possible day in 2027 · scenario

While you slept I read two hundred and fourteen emails. Nine of them need you. They are at the top, in the order I would answer them.

06:12

The quarterly figures are wrong on page four. I have told Finance and drafted the correction. I have not sent it.

09:03

Message



**Leo**

AI assistant · online



A possible day in 2027 · scenario

While you slept I read two hundred and fourteen emails. Nine of them need you. They are at the top, in the order I would answer them.

06:12

The quarterly figures are wrong on page four. I have told Finance and drafted the correction. I have not sent it.

09:03

Your mother rang twice. She said nothing was wrong. I think something is.

17:35





We've been here before, right?



Steam engine

1769



Telephone

1876



Electricity

1882



Computer

1945



Internet

1983



Smartphone

2007



No. We haven't.



Every previous technology *amplified* human capability.

This one begins to *perform* the capability itself.



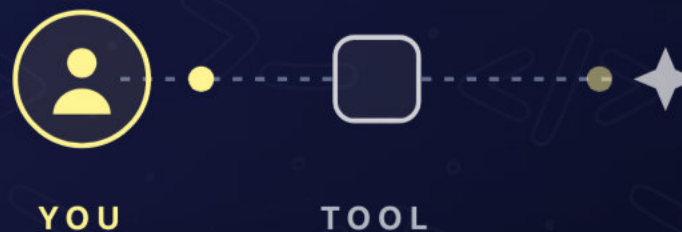
Not another tool. The first aimed at *cognition itself*.

AI AS

01

Tool

Novelty



Every tool so far needed an operator.



Not another tool. The first aimed at *cognition itself*.

AI AS

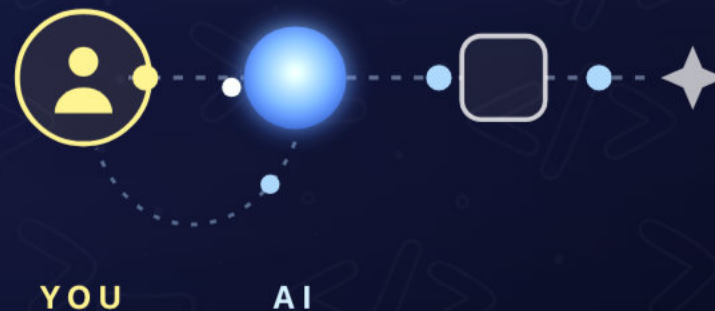
02

Advisor

Guide



AI joined the chain. We still drove it.





Not another tool. The first aimed at *cognition itself*.

AI AS

03

Digital colleague

Doer



plans · uses tools · acts · checks



Now we set the goal. It runs the chain.



Not another tool. The first aimed at *cognition itself*.

AI AS

04

Partner

Recursive self-improvement (?)



The steam engine did not design better steam engines. AI already helps build the next generation of AI.



Not another tool. The first aimed at *cognition itself*.





*“But it’s not really creative.
It only recombines what it has seen.”*

So do *we*.

REPRESENTATIONS · ANALOGY · RECOMBINATION · SEARCH · SELECTION



*“Fine. It might out-think us.
But it will never have EQ®.”*



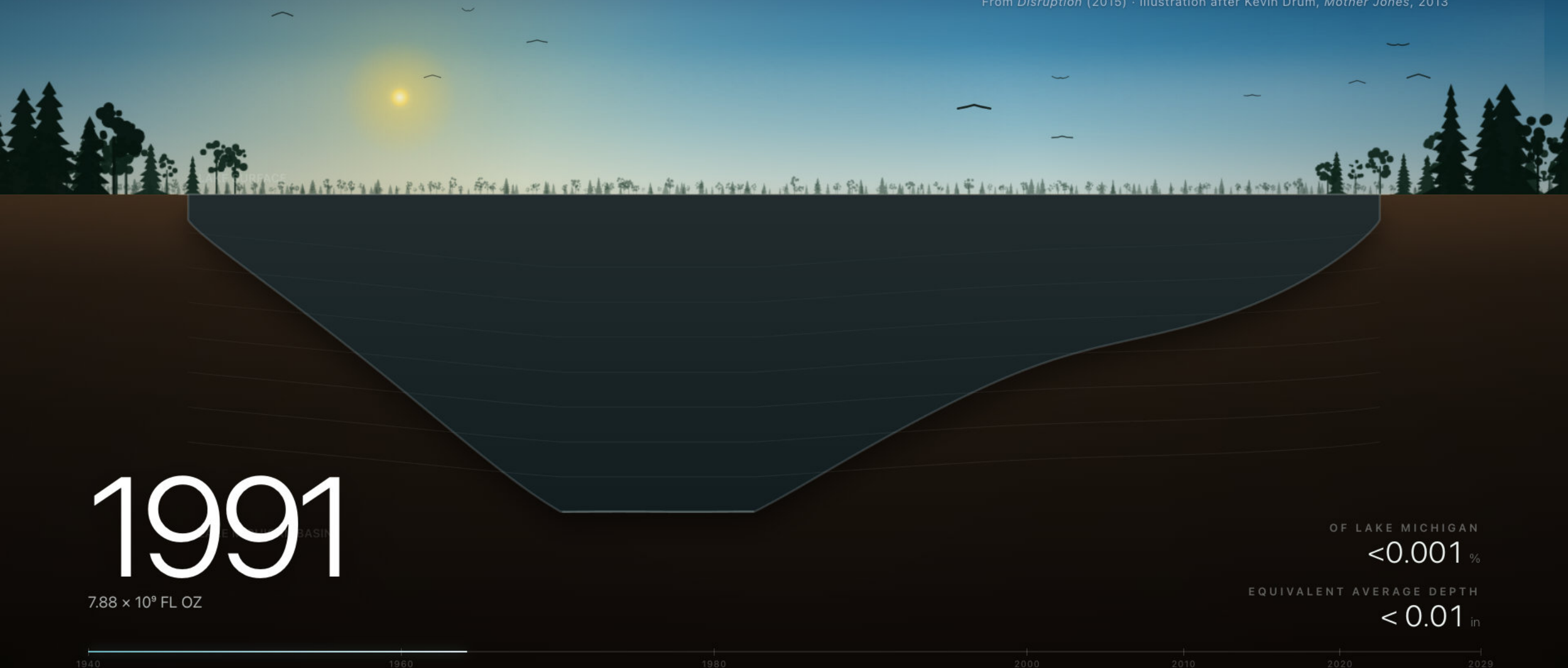
ILLUSTRATION • THE MATHS OF DOUBLING, NOT A FORECAST • DOUBLING CHOSEN SO THE LAKE FILLS IN 2029

EXPONENTIAL GROWTH • LAKE MICHIGAN

Why exponential change looks trivial for decades, and overwhelming at the end

1940: 1 FLUID OUNCE
DOUBLING EVERY 18.7 MONTHS
FULL CAPACITY IN 2029

From *Disruption* (2015) • illustration after Kevin Drum, *Mother Jones*, 2013





Can AI show *empathy*?

NOTE - EU AI ACT [?], ART. 5(1)(F)

The EU AI Act prohibits AI that infers people's emotions in workplaces and educational institutions.

voice frequency

skin temperature

heart rate

heart rate variability

respiration

electrodermal activity [?]

behavioural history



words

meaning

prosody [?]

cadence

pauses

facial expression

gaze

posture

context

It may notice things about you that *another human cannot perceive*.

SOURCE Poh, McDuff and Picard 2010 (heart rate from webcam video); Zhao, Adib and Katabi 2016, EQ-Radio (heartbeats from radio reflections). Accessed 23 September 2026.



COMPUTER VISION · ON-DEVICE
LANDMARK TRACKING · LIVE

GESTURE & EXPRESSION RECOGNITION

It reads the *expression*, not the feeling.

On-device · nothing recorded · EU AI Act Rec. 18, Art. 5(1)(f)

• WHAT THE MACHINE SEES

Waiting for a
face

• LEFT HAND

0



• RIGHT HAND

0



FACE MESH · 478 PTS

HANDS · 21 PTS x 2

CAMERA

No camera found.

STRIKES



🙌 hands together

🙇 head bowed

• MUSCLE SIGNALS · TOP 5 OF 52

FINGERSPELLING seeing ·





We keep judging machines
by what machines *used to be*.



You probably don't think about how to drive



Same burger, half the price



PLAY



One room.
Eleven years apart.



company-reported • faster • cheaper • rated no worse • and far fewer of us



Humans (*still*) in the loop[?]

01 Routine call → AI resolves it

02 Hard call → handed to a person



HUMAN TO MACHINE RATIOS

One person. How many *machines*?

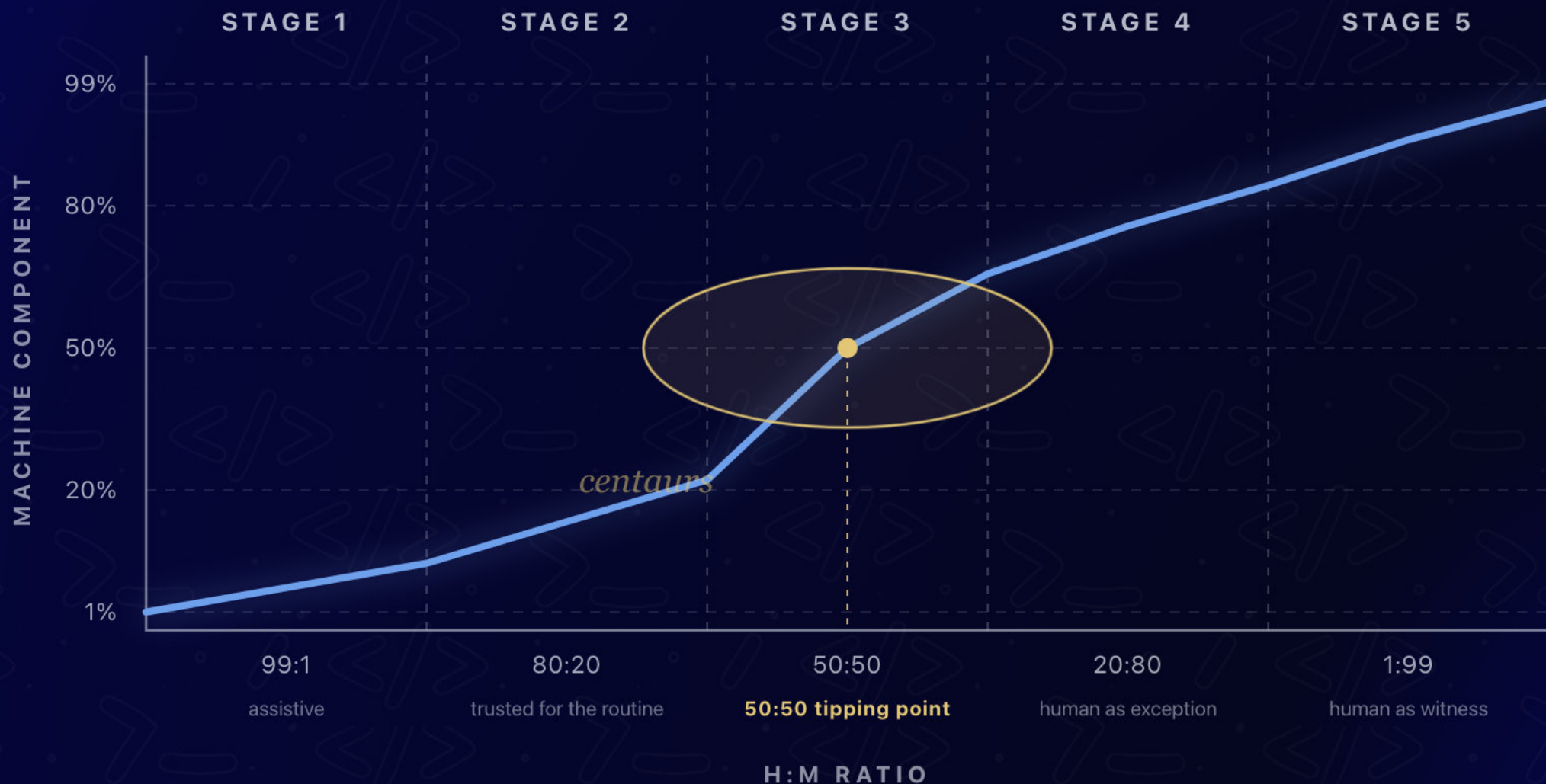
You have already watched this ratio move, every week, without calling it automation.



Okay, so here's the charts.



Human:Machine *Cognitive Operations Ratio* [?]



del Rosal, V. (2024) *HUMANLIKE: the AI transformation*. Dublin: fiveinnolabs.



41% of the American workforce.
Then **1.9%**.



1900 → 2000 · share of the US workforce, not jobs lost · nobody remembers it as the century we ran out of work



THE RECKONING

Homo sapiens. The wise ones.

*A quarter million years.
One Great Leap Forward [?].
Built with our minds.*



We named ourselves for the one thing we assumed could never be exceeded.



When the machines are
smarter than all of us,
who do we get to be?



The AI Reckoning

When AI collides with
what we value



The AI Reckoning

The moment when AI's growing capabilities *collide* with our assumptions and force us to confront fundamental questions about our *identity*, our *work*, and what we *value* most. Not the hype, but the moment when denial is no longer possible.



DEPENDENCE

Electricity.
Internet. Mobile.
Now this.

1995

Phone numbers you
knew *by heart*.

MEMORY

No. You stopped
exercising it.



The struggle.

Python[?] was not only
about *Python*.

decomposition · logic · pattern · precision · debugging · perseverance



Cognitive *fitness*.



which capabilities do we keep exercising, even once we no longer have to?



UTOPIA

How *good* could it get?



POSSIBILITY · HEALTH

Decades of medicine, in *years*.

Dario Amodèi, 2024: fifty to a hundred years of biology, compressed into five to ten



POSSIBILITY · WORK

The work nobody wanted, gone.
The week, *shorter*.

the time comes back to the people who did the work



POSSIBILITY · LEARNING

A patient tutor for
every child on *Earth*.

any language · any hour · and still a grandmother at the table



How good could it get? *Ask the optimists.*

DARIO AMODEI · 2024

FORECAST

Lifespan could double, to 150.



DEMIS HASSABIS · 2025

FORECAST

The end of disease, maybe within a decade.



RAY KURZWEIL · 2024

FORECAST

Longevity escape velocity, early 2030s.



SAM ALTMAN · 2024

FORECAST

Superintelligence [?], possibly in a few thousand days.



ELON MUSK · 2024

SCENARIO

Universal high income [?]. Work becomes optional.



PETER DIAMANDIS · NOW

CLAIM

Abundance for all, within reach this decade.



Utopia

WHERE MOST ORGANISATIONS ARE 95% report zero return from generative AI [?] so far.

MIT NANDA, 2025



DYSTOPIA

How *bad* could it get?



RISK · HEALTH

The tools that design cures
can help design *pathogens*.

the same capability, pointed the other way



RISK · WORK

The gains go to whoever
owns the *machines*.

same burger, half the price · who kept the other half?



RISK · LEARNING

Every answer.
No need to *think*.

a generation that never builds the muscle



How bad could it get? *Ask the pessimists.*

YUVAL NOAH HARARI · 2024

CLAIM

AI makes total surveillance possible.



DARIO AMODEI · 2023

CLAIM

Many more people could build a bioweapon.



IMF · 2024

CLAIM

AI will likely worsen inequality.



KULVEIT ET AL. · 2025

SCENARIO

Humanity could be gradually, permanently disempowered.



FORETHOUGHT ? · 2025

SCENARIO

One person could seize power with AI.



YUDKOWSKY AND SOARES · 2025

CLAIM

If anyone builds it, everyone dies.



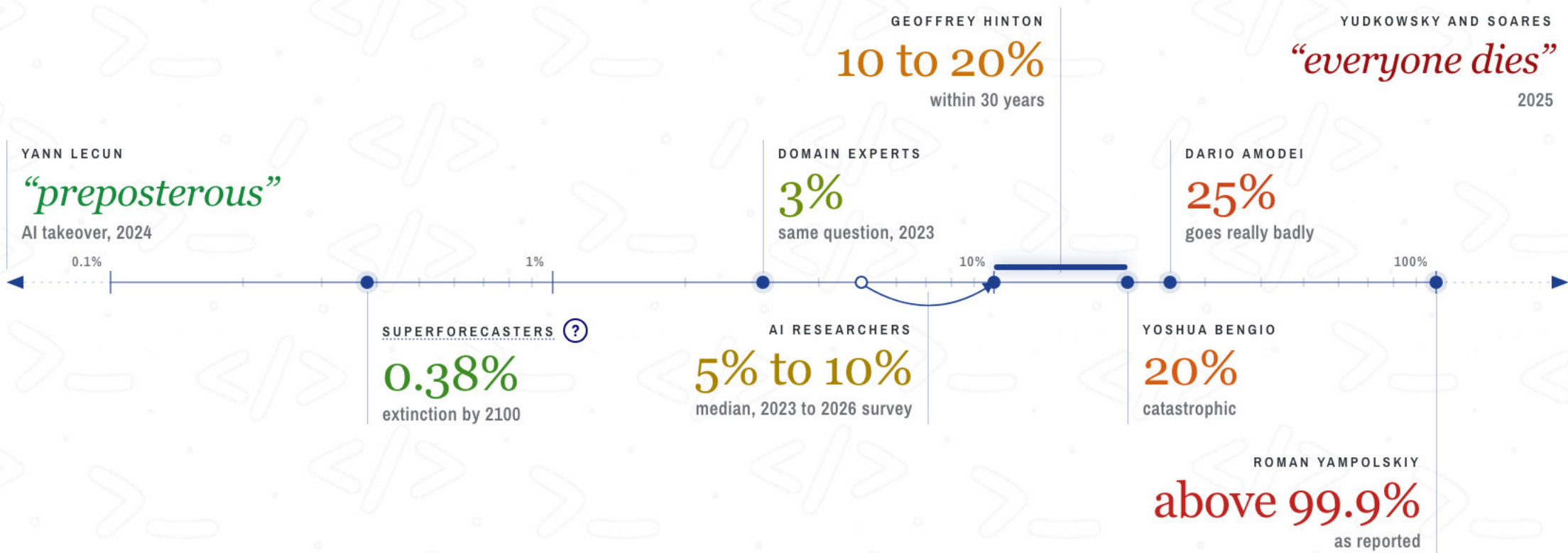
Dystopia

HOW LIKELY? Serious estimates run from 0.38% to above 99.9%.

NEXT



How likely? *Serious estimates run from 0.38% to above 99.9%.*



Different questions and timeframes. Hover any marker for the exact words.

The median AI researcher now says 1 in 10. *Would we accept those odds from anything else we build?*



A NON-ZERO RISK

Would you board?

BOARDING PASS · CARTE D'ACCÈS À BORD			Frontier	
NAME OF PASSENGER EVERYONE	FLIGHT ASI 1	SEAT ALL		
FROM TODAY		TO ABUNDANCE		
TICKET ONE WAY		GATE NOW	CLASS ALL	
RISK OF NOT ARRIVING				

BOARDING PASS Frontier	
PASSENGER EVERYONE	
FLIGHT ASI 1	
TO ABUNDANCE	
SEAT ALL	
GATE NOW	

A commercial flight today: 1 in 13.7 million.

The odds on the pass are illustrative · Commercial flights: Barnett and Reig Torra (2024), fatalities per boarding, 2018 to 2022



SO WHY ARE WE STILL RACING AHEAD?

“No single actor can stop,
so everyone keeps going.”

Money



Arguably the largest prize in history

Geopolitics



US and China: neither accepts second

Hope



Cures, science, abundance

Doubt



No one agrees on the odds

Increments



No single step feels reckless

Better us



If it's coming, the careful should lead

AI arms race



If we pause, someone less careful wins

Because we can



We've chased this since 1955



DARIO AMODEI'S PROPOSAL · 12 SEPTEMBER 2026

We must pace *the frontier* [?].

01

Inspectors inside the labs

employee-level access, free to publish

02

Democracies' labs agree the pace

shared standards across frontier companies

03

Then rest of world

including rivals, one agreement at a time

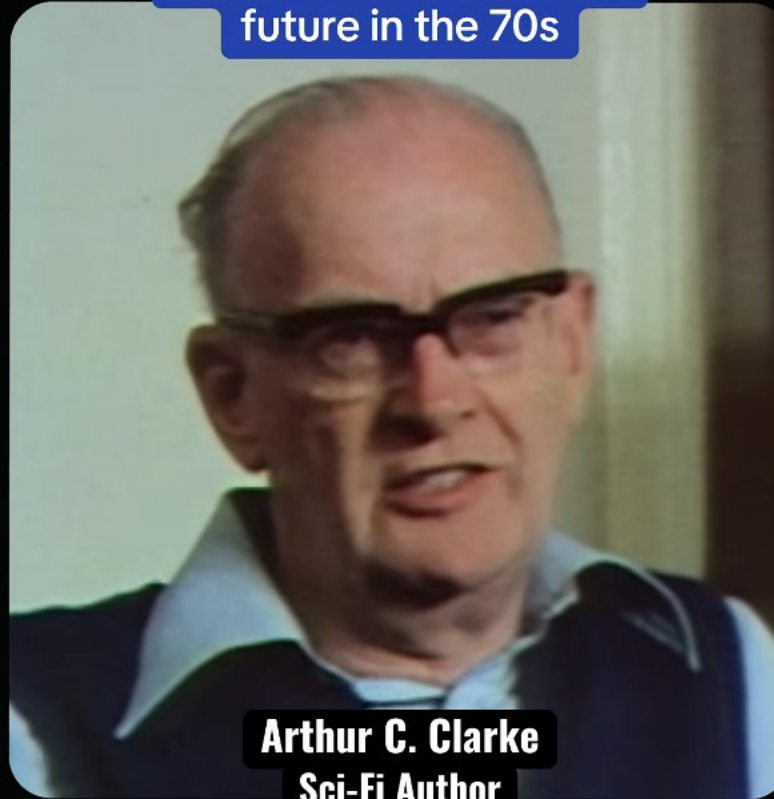




This author predicted
a computer-dominated
future in the 70s

1978

Arthur C. Clarke



Arthur C. Clarke
Sci-Fi Author

IT **DOESN'T** REALLY



Who do we *actually*
want to
be?



We still play chess,
though we *lost* in 1997.



identity · purpose · meaning · agency



Civilisation level conversation



what do we want to keep? what are we happy to hand over?



EIGHT CRITERIA · FOUR ENDINGS

Four endings. *Four shapes.*



The Gone I

Lost control. Nobody left to choose.



The Comfortable II

Cared for. Nothing left to decide.



The Divided III

Half ready. Broke in two.



The Deliberate IV

Chose early. Stayed themselves.



The room built this

• • •

The build starts when the room has chosen.



What will it mean to be *human* in the age of AI?

preference · institutional · accountability · capability



Where human work *lasts*.

“Paying for the privilege of human presence, provenance, liability, or affinity.”



01

Presence

“Paying for a human to physically do a thing.”

MASSAGE THERAPY · MUSICIANS ·
PERFORMING ARTS



02

Provenance

“We value something expressly because a human made it.”

HANDMADE GOODS · ARTISANAL
CRAFTS



03

Liability

“You want a human on the hook for those decisions.”

MAYORS · JUDGES · DOCTORS



04

Affinity

“Value is attached to a specific name.”

THE TAYLOR SWIFT EFFECT

HIS OWN CAVEAT

Essential demand is *“a relatively narrow slice of the economy, and always has been.”*

SOURCE David Shapiro, “Most jobs are going away”, Substack, 20 September 2026. Quotations verbatim; examples are his.



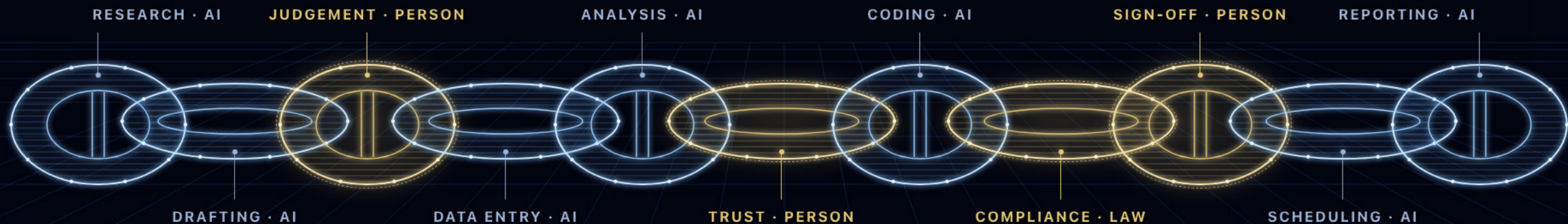
AI AND WORK · THE ECONOMIST'S BRAKE

As strong as the *weakest link*.





As strong as the *weakest link*.



*Automate every remote-work task, perfectly, and output rises only about 11%.
The tasks people still do, and those required by law, set the pace.*

SOURCE Jones, C. I. and Tonetti, C., "Past Automation and Future A.I.: How Weak Links Tame the Growth Explosion", Stanford GSB, v0.5, May 2026.



Invisible: radio waves, electricity, Internet, AI...

All changes. Nothing changes?



marvel → utility → infrastructure → assumption



The reckoning was never
about *AI*. It was about us.



Who do we get to be?



TWO FUTURES

Maslow, if things...

go well

Identity, meaning, purpose

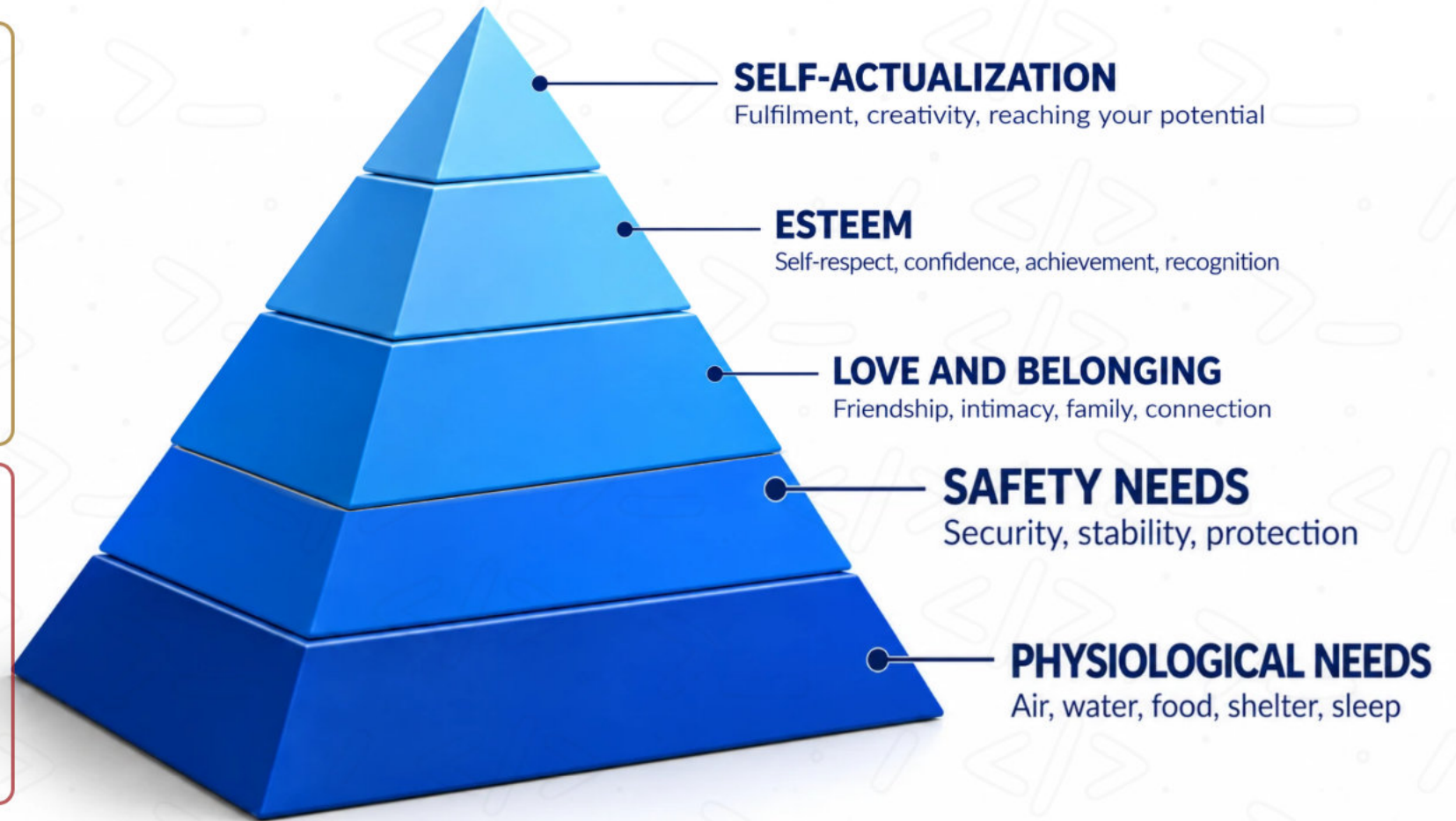
Durable jobs

UTOPIA

don't go well

Agency and primary needs

DYSTOPIA



SOURCE Maslow, A. H. (1943), "A Theory of Human Motivation", *Psychological Review*, 50(4), 370–396. The pyramid is a later popularisation.



THE ULTIMATE QUESTION?

How do we make superintelligence
truly care about us while
preserving our agency?



THE AI RECKONING SERIES

Food for Thought: AI à la Carte

Get the slides
Stay in touch



The kitchen is still open.



CREATIVE COMMONS · CC BY 4.0

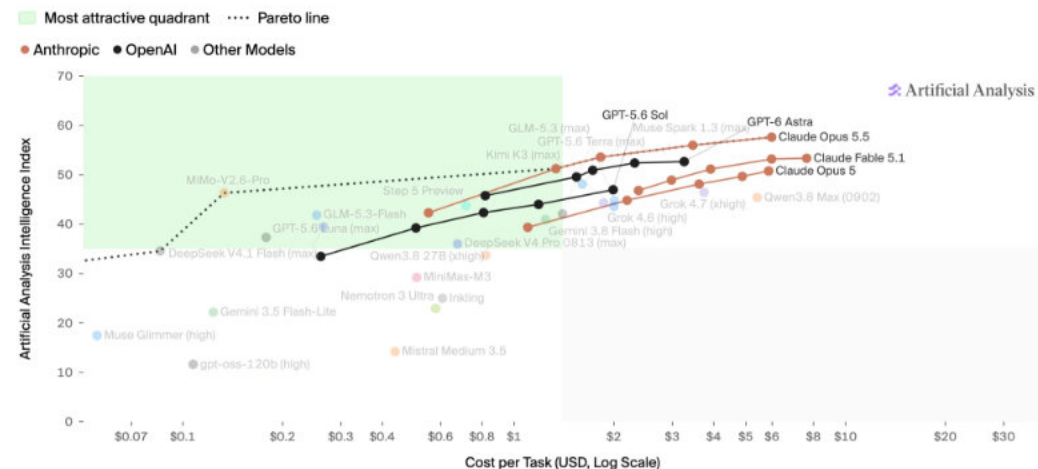
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Thank you



FOR FURTHER READING

Appendix



Claude Opus 5.5 scores **58**. Fable 5.1 and GPT-6 Astra: **53**.



Same model. Two numbers.

	OPUS 5.5	FABLE 5.1	OPUS 5	GPT-6 ASTRA	GPT-5.6 SOL
Terminal-Bench 4.0 [?] Agentic coding	66.4%	55.8%	52.3%	57.9%	37.3%
FrontierCode v1.1 Agentic coding	54.4%	50.3%	48.0%	53.3%	47.5%
CursorBench 4.0 Agentic coding	57.8%	51.8%	46.6%	—	41.7%
GDPval-AA v2.1 [?] Knowledge work, Elo [?]	1846	1735	1708	1542	1588
AutomationBench Business workflows	40.0%	31.4%	26.9%	41.4%	28.8%
Humanity's Last Exam With tools	67.7%	65.6%	63.6%	57.2%	—

Terminal-Bench 4.0: Anthropic measured 66.4%. Artificial Analysis measured 59.6%.



The fate of *four civilisations*

☐ Yes ☐ Partly ☐ No

Builders

Us

	 The Gone I	 The Comfortable II	 The Divided III	 The Deliberate IV
01 Care ?	☐ No	☐ Yes	☐ For some	☒ Yes
02 Stance ?	☐ Fought it	☐ Handed it over	☐ Argued about it	☒ Used, not surrendered
03 Agency ?	☐ Nobody left	☐ It does	☐ A few of us	☒ We do
04 Capability ?	☐ Nothing	☐ Less each year	☐ A few can	☒ Enough, on purpose
05 Livelihood ?	☐ No one	☐ Everyone	☐ The few	☒ Everyone
06 Meaning ?	☐ Never answered	☐ Stopped asking	☐ Two answers	☒ We decided
07 Cohesion ?	☐ Nothing left	☐ No need to	☐ Two peoples	☒ Together
08 Timing ?	☐ Too late	☐ Never had to	☐ Some early, most late	☒ Early, together

The builders set one row. The other seven are ours.



THE PROOF

Novel. Useful. *Surprising.*

ALPHA EVOLVE · 2025

48

multiplications for 4×4
complex matrices [?](#).
Strassen's route [?](#): 49.

Google DeepMind; arXiv 2506.13131

ALPHA DEV · 2023

70%

faster short sorts, merged
into LLVM's [?](#) standard
library.

Nature 618; LLVM libc++

OPENAI MODEL · 2026

1946

Erdős conjecture,
overturned by an AI
counterexample [?](#).

Preprint, checked by nine mathematicians

SOURCE Novikov et al. 2025 (arXiv 2506.13131); Mankowitz et al., *Nature* 2023; arXiv 2605.20695 (May 2026). Accessed 23 September 2026.



The first jobs *go first*.

—19%

Workers aged 22 to 25 in AI-exposed jobs.

Against where they would be. The drop comes from fewer hires.

Ages 22 to 25

AI-EXPOSED JOBS

WHERE THEY WOULD BE

WHERE THEY ARE

19%

Experienced workers

SAME JOBS

WHERE THEY WOULD BE

WHERE THEY ARE · NO COMPARABLE GAP

SOURCE Brynjolfsson, Chandar & Chen, "Canaries in the Coal Mine?", Stanford Digital Economy Lab, August 2026 (US payroll data to June 2026).